

MEDFORD AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

DATE ADOPTED: February 16, 1989 FILE SECTOR: INSTRUCTION
DATE REVISED: July 15, 1999 POLICY TITLE: EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS
DATE REVISED: November 21, 2013 SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The Medford Area Public School District Board of Education recognizes the value of educational materials as a key component in providing high quality educational opportunities for district students. The Medford Area Public School District Board of Education, as a policy making body, delegates the responsibility for coordinating the selection of and making recommendations for the purchase of instructional materials to the appropriate professionally trained personnel employed by the board of education. Such personnel shall select all educational materials in accordance with established Medford Area Public School District Board of Education guidelines.

DEFINITIONS

Educational Materials: The comprehensive term used to refer to all print and non-print materials that are part of the educational programs of the Medford Area Public School District.

Instructional Materials: Those materials that are required by and circulated from the instructional material centers (IMC's) for student and staff use.

Basic Text Materials: The book(s) or set of instructional materials that serves as the foundation for a course's content.

Supplementary Materials: Print, audio-visual materials, models, television programs, CD's, computer or other software resources used to expand the opportunities for students in a course and which are not included in the definitions of *Basic Text* or *Instructional Materials*.

OBJECTIVES

Instructional Materials: The primary objective of the Medford Area Public School District media program, through the IMC's, is to implement, enrich and support the educational programs of the Medford Area Public School District. To this end, the Medford Area Public School District Board of Education reaffirms their belief in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as it applies to this policy.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

The Medford Area Public School District media program, as an integral part of the educational program of the Medford Area Public School District:

1. Provides a comprehensive collection of instructional materials that meet the curricular and personal needs of the user, taking into consideration their varied interests, abilities, maturity levels and learning styles.

2. Provides material that stimulates growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards.
3. Provides a background of information which enables users to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
4. Provides materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that users may develop the practice of critical analysis.
5. Provides materials representative of the many religious, ethnic and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.
6. Provides for recreational reading.

Basic Texts and Supplementary Materials: Books and materials used as a required part of a class or program are subject to the selection and approval procedures of the consideration processes as outlined in Medford Area Public School District Board of Education Procedure IIA-R.

The objectives when considering basic texts and supplementary materials are to:

1. Select them in accordance with the philosophy and educational program of the Medford Area Public School District.
2. Ensure accurate and up-to-date content by selecting basic texts and supplementary materials that include valid concepts, insights and facts.
3. Select those basic texts and supplementary materials that provide for a sequential growth from level to level.
4. Select basic texts and supplementary material that provide a fair representation of the many religious, ethnic and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.
5. Follow the curriculum cycle as recommended by the district administrator.

The Medford Area Public School District shall not discriminate in the selection and evaluation of instructional and library materials or media on the basis of sex, race, national origin, religion, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability. Discrimination complaints shall be processed in accordance with established procedures.

CROSS REFERENCE:

LEGAL REFERENCE: §118.03 §118.13, §120.13(5), §121.02(1)(h), Wis. Stats.,
PI 8.01(2)(h) and PI 9.03(h), Wis. Admin. Code

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PROCEDURE

GENERAL CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. The following criteria will be used as they apply:
1. Materials shall support and be consistent with the general education goals of the Medford Area Public School District and the objectives of specific courses.
 2. Materials shall meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation.
 3. Materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, ability and maturity level of the students for whom the materials are selected.
 4. Materials shall have aesthetic, literary, historical and/or social value.
 5. Materials chosen shall be by competent and qualified authors and producers.
 6. Materials shall be chosen to foster respect and provide a fair representation of religious, ethnic, minority and cultural groups and their contributions to our American History. They shall depict in an accurate and balanced way the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of our society.
 7. Materials shall be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses. Materials are judged as a whole, taking into account the author's/producer's intent rather than focusing solely upon individual words, phrases, pictures, or incidents taken out of context.
 8. Biased or slanted materials may be provided to meet specific curriculum objectives and/or to provide for a complete and balanced collection.
 9. Physical format and appearance of materials shall be suitable for their intended use.
- B. It is the goal of the Medford Area Public School District Board of Education to provide a current, balanced collection of materials which will give students an overall picture of the diverse world in which we live. Materials on controversial subjects will be selected to represent the fullest range of contrasting points of view. Criteria for selection in some of these areas include:
1. **Religion** - factual materials about major religions will be included in Educational Materials that are chosen to inform rather than convince and are selected to represent the subject as widely as necessary for educational purposes.
 2. **Racism** - the diversity of our nation's racial and cultural heritage shall be presented in factual materials as a positive element of our society and unresolved inter-cultural problems, such as prejudice, discrimination and the undesirable consequences of withholding individual rights and respect will be candidly treated.
 3. **Political Ideologies** - any ideology or philosophy of government exerting an influence on our way of life, favorable or unfavorable, will be represented by factual materials at appropriate reading levels and should include a balanced collection representing various views.

4. **Sex and profanity** - each work will be evaluated on the basis of its literary quality, its accuracy and its relevance to the curriculum. Use of profanity or sexual incidents in a literary work will not automatically disqualify it from consideration for inclusion in the collection.
 5. **Human Physiology** - material on human physiology, development or personal hygiene will be chosen based on its accuracy and appropriateness for its intended audience.
 6. **Biased Materials** - educational materials which viciously treat a particular race, sex, ethnic group, age group, religion, etc., shall not be selected unless there exists a legitimate educational purpose, such as analysis, observation, historical development or interpretation.
- C. When selecting textbooks and supplementary materials, in addition to the selection criteria listed above, consideration will also be given to readability and difficulty levels, skills or prior learning required of students (sequence), skills or inservice required of teachers, and provisions for ascertaining mastery of content by students.

PROCEDURES FOR SELECTION

A. Instructional Materials

1. The responsibility for coordinating the selection of instructional materials, using Medford Area Public School District Board of Education guidelines, is delegated to the Instructional Media Specialists. In selecting materials for purchase, the Instructional Media Specialists will evaluate the existing media center collection and assess curricular needs. They will give consideration to recommendations from faculty and students.
2. Instructional materials under consideration should be evaluated first-hand whenever and wherever this is possible. Reputable, unbiased and professionally prepared selection tools and other aides will be utilized in the process.
3. Gift materials shall be judged by the same selection criteria as other instructional materials purchased by the Medford Area Public School District and other policies of the board of education.
4. Selection is an ongoing process, which includes a systematic review of the instructional media collections to weed out obsolete material. The collections will be re-evaluated in relation to changing curriculum content, new instructional methods, and current needs of teachers and students. Appropriate materials will be obtained for these new developments. The process of re-evaluation also will lead to the replacement of outmoded materials with those that are up-to-date, the discarding of materials no longer useful, and the replacement of materials in poor repair.
5. The materials in the instructional media center will be supplemented by interlibrary loans when appropriate.

B. Basic Texts and Supplementary Materials

The district administrator or his/her designee shall establish a curriculum cycle which shall include the process and timeline for selecting basic textbooks and supplementary materials to be used in the instructional program. All materials selected shall comply with Medford Area Public School District Board of Education selection guidelines. The textbooks and related materials selected as part of the curriculum development/revision process become part of the revised curriculum when approved by the Medford Area Public School District Board of Education.

Other supplementary materials (i.e. trade books, etc.) may be selected at the discretion of the classroom teacher or other specialist in accordance with Medford Area Public School District Board of Education Educational Materials selection policy.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

- A. No materials shall be removed from the instructional media center or curriculum until a final decision on the request for reconsideration has been reached. While under reconsideration, access to questioned materials can be denied only to the student(s) of those making the complaint.

- B. Citizens and/or personnel of the Medford Area Public School District may register criticism of material with the building principal, building instructional media specialist or teacher at which time the material in question will be discussed with the complainant.
 - 1. The school official or staff member receiving the complaint shall explain to the complainant the school's selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the material.
 - 2. The school official or staff member receiving the complaint shall explain the particular place the objected material occupies in the educational program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use, or refer the complaining party to someone who can identify and explain the use of the material.
 - 3. In the event that the person making an objection to material is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the person shall be referred to the principal or the instructional media specialist to handle the complaint. If, after consultation, the complainant desires to file a formal complaint, the person to whom the complainant was referred will assist in filling out a reconsideration request form, as completely as possible.
 - 4. A written record of the contact shall be maintained by the principal and instructional media specialist.
 - 5. After a reconsideration request form has been completed and signed by the complainant, it should be filed with the building principal who shall forward copies to the district administrator and the director of curriculum.
 - 6. Within 20 working days of receipt of the written complaint, the director of curriculum or his/her designee shall appoint a reconsideration committee, made up of seven voting members and one non-voting member, as follows:
 - a. The director of curriculum who shall chair the committee. (If the district administrator feels there may be a conflict of interest because the director of curriculum selected the materials in question, the district administrator may appoint another administrator to chair the committee other than the building principal where the complaint was filed.)

- b. One teacher from the building in which the complaint was filed who is not directly associated with the complaint.
 - c. One instructional media specialist from a building other than the one where the complaint was filed.
 - d. One additional administrator other than the building principal where the complaint was filed.
 - e. Three members of the community, appointed by the district administrator or his/her designee, from a list of volunteers maintained in the district office and updated annually or as needed. If an appropriate number of volunteers is not available, then the district administrator will randomly contact parents from the school at which the questioned material is located until an appropriate number of citizens has been identified.
 - f. The instructional media specialist from the building in which the complaint was filed shall serve as a non-voting member of the committee.
7. The instructional media specialist from the building where the complaint was filed shall provide the reconsideration committee members with copies of the signed reconsideration request form, the educational materials in question, any critical evaluations or reviews, and any other materials that the reconsideration committee or instructional media specialist feel is pertinent to the question.
8. The committee chair will follow the notification procedures pursuant to the Open Meetings Law before each meeting of the reconsideration committee. If the committee so desires, persons with access to pertinent information relevant to the committee assignment may be called upon for their input (i.e. complainant, staff involved, etc.).
- The complainant may make an initial verbal presentation regarding the materials under consideration at the first meeting. Observers may be invited to voice their views; however, after these opportunities, neither the complainant nor other observers may participate in the committee's deliberations unless requested to do so by the committee.
9. The reconsideration committee may hold as many open meetings as necessary to resolve the issues. Within 30 working days of the convening of the committee unless there are extraordinary circumstances, they shall issue their report.
10. The reconsideration committee shall, in determining their recommendation(s):
- a. read, view, or listen to the questioned material in its entirety;
 - b. evaluate the material by reading reviews, critical evaluations and recommended lists which were used when the materials were selected and may consult additional references as needed ;
 - c. determine the extent to which the material meet the policy selection criteria;
 - d. listen to any verbal input from the complainant or other parties;
 - e. discuss the material;
 - f. Complete the appropriate checklist for reconsideration of educational materials.
 - g. Complete a recommendation form to forward to the district administrator. Decision(s) shall be reached by a simple majority vote using an open ballot. The ballot will include the following options:
 - 1) Retain the material at "status quo"
 - 2) Restrict the materials to (a) the complainant(s) student(s), (b) require parental permission for any student to use the material, or (c) age appropriate student

- 3) Withdraw the material
 - 4) Others as may apply to specific materials
11. Materials in question will remain in use until a final decision is made by the board of education.
 12. The decision of the reconsideration committee shall be considered a final recommendation to the Medford Area Public School District Board of Education. This recommendation will be presented to the board of education by the district administrator with input from the committee chairperson within 30 working days. Copies of the recommendation will be provided for the complainant.
 13. After the board of education considers the recommendation(s) of the reconsideration committee and renders its decision, the material in question will be retained, withdrawn, or restricted as mandated by the decision of the board of education.
 14. The district administrator shall inform the complainant in writing of the action taken.
 15. The administrative representative on the committee will provide the media with information from the school perspective.
 16. A decision to sustain a challenge shall not be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection or use of the resources.

CROSS REFERENCE:

LEGAL REFERENCE: §118.03, §118.13, §121.02(1)(h) Wis. Stats. & PI 8.01(2)(h), PI 9 WI Admin. Code